

Message Text

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ACTION OES-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 HEW-02 AID-05 COME-00 EB-07 FRB-03 TRSE-00

XMB-02 OPIC-03 CIEP-01 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 IO-11

SAM-01 /103 W

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R 260634Z JAN 76

FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6749

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 AMMAN 0415

FOR INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON POPULATION POLICY FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: SPOP

SUBJECT: IMPLICATIONS OF WORLDWIDE POPULATION GROWTH FOR UNITED
STATE SECURITY AND OVERSEAS INTERESTS

REF: 75 STATE 301427

1. JORDAN POPULATION POLICY. PARAGRAPH ARE LETTERED IN
ACCORDANCE WITH PARA 4 OF REFTEL.

A. CURRENTLY JORDAN HAS NO OFFICIAL POLICY WITH RESPECTS TO FAMILY
PLANNING. IT PERMITS, BUT UP TO NOW HAS NOT SUPPORTED, PRIVATELY
SPONSORED ACTIVITIES. THE ISSUE SIMPLY HAS BEEN TOO SENSITIVE.
OPPOSITION COMES FROM BOTH MOSLEM AND CHRISTIAN LEADERS AND
AT THE SAME TIME TRADITIONAL ATTITUDES AND VALUES THROUGHOUT JOR-
DAN SOCIETY LIMITED RECEPTIVITY TO AND INTEREST IN SUCH PROGRAM.
MORE IMPORTANTLY HOWEVER BOTH EAST BANK AND PALESTINIANS
ELEMENTS IN JORDAN TEND TO VIEW SUCH PROGRAM AS A THREAT TO THEIR
NUMBERS AND POSITIONS. FAMILY PLANNING THUS BECOMES ENTANGLED
IN THE MOST SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUE IN THE COUNTRY.

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WHILE WE HAVETAKEN NO POLL, FEW OF THE GOJ OFFICIALS WITH

WHOM THE EMBASSY DEALS EXPRESS STRONG PERSONAL FEELINGS AGAINST FAMILY PLANNING PER SE. INDEED A NUMBER RECOGNIZE A NEED FOR SUCH A PROGRAM. NONE HAVE TAKEN A STAND, HOWEVER AT LEAST PUBLICLY.

SEVERAL DEVELOPMENTS IN RECENT MONTHS SUGGEST THE GOJ MAY BE GRADUALLY MOVING TO A MORE POSTIVE STANCE. CROWN PRINCE HASSAN, WHO HAS LARGE RESPONSIBILITY FOR JORDANIAN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECENTLY PRIVATELY INFORMED AMBASSADOR THAT HE HAD SUCCEEDED IN BREAKING THROUGH TRADITIONALISTS OBJECTIONS AND GETTING FORMAL, ALTHOUGH NOT YET PUBLIC, GOJ APPROVAL OF FAMILY PLANNING IN JORDAN. THE NEW JORDANIAN GIVE YEAR PLAN ALBIET AMBIGUOUSLY INDICATES THE GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO ADOPT A FAMILY PLANNING POLICY DURING THE PLANNING PERIOD. THE UNIVERSITY OF JORDAN ALSO HAS TAKEN STEPS TO CREATE AN INTERDEPARTMENTAL POPULATION DYNAMICS PROGRAM INVOLVING RESEARCH AS WELL THE INTRODUCTION OF POP ULATIONS RELATED ISSUES INTO AGRICULATURAL,SOCIAL SCIENCE,MEDICAL AND OTHER COURSE WORK. THE GOVERNMENT HAS ALSO RECENTLY SPON SORED A FEW SEMINARS IN THE SUBJECT AND GIVEN THEM MORE PUBLICITY THAN WOULD HAVE OCCURRED A FEW YEARS AGO. THERE IS SOME REASON TO BELIEVE THAT TRADITIONALRESISTANCE TO FAMILY PLANNING MAY BE LESSENING. PALESTINIANS REFUGEES--WHO HAVE TENDED TO DESIRE EXTREMELY LARGE FAMILIES--HAVE IN RECENT YEARS COME MORE AND MORE TO CONSULT PRIVATE AND VOLUNTARY AGENCIES FAMILY PLANNING CLINICS. RECENTLY THE JORDANIAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE PRESS PUBLISHED AN ESTIMATE (WHICH WE CANNOT CORRABORATE AND WHICH WE BELIVE IS HIGHLY DOUBFUL THAT 60PERCENT OF JORDANIAN WOMEN ARE USING MODERN FAMILY PLANNING METHODS.

PERHAPS MOST SIGNIFICATNTLY THE GOJ RECENTLY SIGNED A \$2 MILLION AGREEMENT WITH UNFPA IN SUPPORT OF FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH MCH CENTERS. THE 2 YEAR PRO-JECT CALLS FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A CENTER IN AMMAN TO TRAIN STAFF FROM THE 4 MCH CENTERS IN THE INSERTION OF THE LOOP. THE UNFPA WILL PROVIDE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COMMODITY SUPPORT TO THE AMMAN CENTER AND THE COUNTRYWIDE PROGRAM ITSELF WHEN THE STAFF HAS BEEN TRAINED. LITTLE PUBLICITY HAS BEEN GIVEN TO THE AGREEMENT NOR DOES THE GOJ PLAN TO PUBLICIZE THE AVAILABILITY OF THESE SERVICES WHEN THEY BECOMRE AVAILABLE. NEVERTHELESS THE EXISTENCE OF ANY CONFIDENTIAL
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SUCH AGREEMENT IS STILL IMPORTANT. SINCE THIS IS SUCH A SENSITIVE ISSUE WE MUST ASSUME THE DECISION COULD ONLY HAVE BEEN TAKEN AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT, WITH HE FULL KNOWLEDGE OF AT LEAST SOME ADVERSE POLITICAL REACTION. IT IS TOO EARLY TO ASSESS THE PROGRAM'S CHANCE OF SUCCESS BUT WE WILL FOLLOW THIS DEVELOPMENT WITH CONSIDERABLE INTEREST.

B. THE EMBASSY HAS NO ACCURATE MEASUREMENT OF THE COST EFFECT-IVENESS OF THE NEW FAMILY PLANNING ACTIVITIES PRESENTLY UNDERWAY THERE ARE 12 CENTERS ON THE EAST BANK PROVIDING GUIDANCE AND

SERVICES, AND THEY APPEAR REASONABLY ACTIVE. THE EDUCATIONAL AND PUBLIC INFORMATION EFFORTS ARE EVEN MORE DIFFICULT TO ASSESS. BY AND LARGE HOWEVER WE UNDERSTAND THESE ACTIVITIES ARE NOT PARTICULARLY WELL ADMINISTERED. THE FAMILY PLANNING AND PROTECTIVE ASSOCIATION ON THE EAST BANK REPORTS TO A PARENT BODY IN JERUSALEM, A RELATIONSHIP ESTABLISHED IN 1967. THIS ARRANGMENT DELAYS THE DECISION MAKING PROCESS AND SOME BELIEVE HAS LESSENERED INTEREST AND PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT ON THE EAST BANK. POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS AT LEAST IN PART EXPLAIN THE FAIOURE OF LOCAL ASSOCIATIONS TO SEVER THESE TIES.

PERIODIC REPORTS FROM THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NON GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION WITH PROGRAM HERE FUTHER INDICATE THAT DAY TO DAY OPERATIONS SUCH AS RECORD KEEPING, FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT ETC LEAVES SOMETHING TO BE DESIRED BUT AHT IT COMPARIES REASONABLY WELL WITH OTHER LDC'S.

C. POPULATION GROTH IN THE EAST BANK IS PROBABLY THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENT IN JORDAN'S SHORT HISTORY, NOT NATURAL GROWTH OF COURSE, BUT EHE INFLUX OF REFUGEES WHICH PERHAPS HAS TRIPLED EAST BANK POPULATION IN 1948, AND ADDED ANOTHER 300,000 IN 1967.

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 AMMAN 0415

THEY BROUGHT WITH THEM VARIOUS SKILLS AND RESOURCES BUT JORDAN ENCOUNTERED ENORMOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN ABSORBING SUCH NUMBERS. PAST AND CURRENT BUDGET AND BALANCE OF PAYMENTS DEFICITS (JORDAN'S MOST SERIOUS ECONOMIC PROBLEMS), TO A GREAT EXTENT ARE A DIRECT RESULT OF THE INVESTMENT AND CONSUMPTION REQUIREMENTS ASSOCIATED WITH THIS POPULATION INCREASE.

WE HAVE NO ACCURATE ESTIMATE OF THE CURRENT RATE OF INCREASE BUT IT MAY BE AS HIGH AS 3.5 PERCENT. IN CONTRAST TO THE REFUGEE PROBLEMS OF THE PAST THIS RATE PALES IN SIGNIFICANCE, YET THE ECONOMIC PLANNERS ARE AWARE OF THE LONGER TERM EFFECT SUCH A RATE HAS ON SOCIAL OVERHEAD EXPENDITURES, IMPORTS, ETC., AND APPEAR TO BE QUIETLY MAKING THESE CONCERNS KNOWN.

D. FOR MUCH OF THE 1950'S REAL UNEMPLOYMENT PROBABLY RANGED BETWEEN 15 AND 20 PERCENT CONCENTRATED IN THE GREATER AMMAN AREA. ALMOST NO AGRICULTURAL LAND WAS AVAILABLE AND REFUGEES WERE HOUSED IN VARIOUS CAMPS. BY THE MID 1960'S ECONOMY HAD EXPANDED SUFFICIENTLY TO REDUCE THIS FIGURE TO AROUND 10 PERCENT. THE DECLINE ALSO REFLECTED THE EMIGRATION OF PALESTINIANS FROM JORDAN TO THE OIL-RICH ARAB COUNTRIES, A TREND WHICH HAS PERHAPS ACCELERATED IN THE PAST YEAR OR SO PARTICULARLY FOR SKILLED WORKERS. THIS MOVEMENT TOGETHER WITH JORDAN'S OWN DEVELOPMENTAL EFFORTS BY AND LARGE HAS ELIMINATED THE UNEMPLOYMENT PROBLEM AS OF
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TODAY. IN FACT A SHORTAGE EXISTS IN CERTAIN SKILLS.

E. MANY OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS IN JORDAN SUCH AS OVERCROPPING, SOIL EROSION, AND OVERGRAZING PREDATE THE REFUGEE INFUX, BUT WITHOUT QUESTION THE POPULATION PRESSURE HAS AGGRAVATED THEM. THE MOST OBVIOUS ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCE IS THE URBAN BLIGHT ASSOCIATED WITH THE LARGE NUMBERS OF PALESTINIAN REFUGEES WHO SETTLED IN MADE-SHIFT CAMPS IN AND AROUND AMMAN YEARS AGO, AND WHO SINCE HAVE GIVEN BIRTH TO LARGE NUMBERS OF CHILDREN. THE SLUMS OF AMMAN ARE LESS DISTRESSING THAN THOSE FOUND IN MANY CITIES OF THE WORLD, DUE TO THE LARGE AMOUNT OF OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE, PARTICULARLY FROM THE UNITED NATIONS REFUGEE AND WORKS ADMINISTRATION (UNRWA), AND BASICALLY WISE GOJ PROGRAMS. NEVERTHELESS THE RAPIDLY RISING POPULATION, PARTICULARLY IN THE AMMAN- ZERQA AREA, STRAINS GOJ ABILITY TO PROVIDE WATER AND SEWAGE, STORM WATER CONTROL, ETC. AND HAS PROMPTED THE GOVERNMENT TO CONSIDER LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT IN OTHER AREAS.

F. JORDAN'S POPULATION GROWTH HAS NOT GENERATED TERRITORIAL EXPANSION NEEDS OR AIMS. CONTINUED GROWTH COULD INCREASE PRESSURE FOR RETURN OF THE FERTILE WEST BANK FROM ISRAELI OCCUPATION, BUT THAT PROBLEM IS ASSOCIATED MOSTLY WITH POPULATION INCREASES DUE TO POLITICAL (REFUGEE) REASONS, NOT NATURAL ONES. INCREASED URBANIZATION WILL BRING WITH IT GREATER POTENTIAL FOR POLITICIZING JORDAN'S RELATIVELY APOLITICAL SOCIETY, BUT THAT IS A FUNCTION AS MUCH OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND SOCIAL CHANGE AS OF POPULATION GROWTH. AS WITH ANY COUNTRY, LARGE INCREASES OF POPULATION WILL BRING SOCIAL AND POLITICAL DISLOCATIONS IF NOT ABSORBED BY ECONOMIC

GROWTH; THAT IS THE FUTURE OF MOST STATES BUT JORDAN IS NOT AMONG THOSE IN WHICH THE PROBLEM IS IMMINENT.

G. WHILE WE HAVE NO FORMAL BILATERAL PROGRAM, THE EMBASSY HAS ENGAGED THE GOJ, AT VARIOUS LEVELS, IN DISCUSSIONS OF POPULATION MATTERS AND OFFERED TO ASSIST IN ANY WAY WE CAN. WE RECENTLY RECEIVED AND APPROVED A SHORT TERM TRAINING REQUEST FOR USAID TRAINING AND MAY RECEIVE MORE IN THE FUTURE WHICH WE WILL GIVE SYMPATHETIC CONSIDERATION. THE FAMILY PLANNING REPRESENTATIVES FROM THE U.N. AND PRIVATE ORGANIZATIONS USUALLY NOTIFY US PRIOR TO THEIR ARRIVAL AND WE LEND WHAT SUPPORT WE CAN TO THEIR EFFORTS. IN THE PROCESS WE ARE ABLE TO STAY REASONABLY WELL INFORMED OF CURRENT ACTIVITIES, EMBASSY REPRESENTATIVES ALSO HAVE ATTENDED THE SEMINARS ON POPULATION CONDUCTED IN THE PAST YEAR OR SO, AND AID FINANCED MEDICAL DOCTOR ON THE UNIVERSITY

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FACULTY IN THE FIELD OF COMMUNITY MEDICINE PROVIDES A MOST USEFUL LINK TO UNIVERSITY OFFICIALS AND THE MEDICAL PROFESSION CONCERNED WITH FAMILY PLANNING. WE DO NOT BELIEVE A MORE ACTIVE U.S. ROLE IS REQUIRED AT THIS TIME. OUR INTEREST IS KNOW, BUT THE GOJ AND LOCAL PRIVATE AGENCIES PREFER TO WORK WITH NON-GOVERNMENTAL INSTITUTIONS. THESE OUTSIDE ORGANIZATIONS QUITE ADEQUATELY PROVIDE THE SUPPORT NEEDED. GREATER EFFORT ON OUR PART PROBABLY WOULD WORK CONTRARY TO OUR INTERESTS AT THIS TIME BECAUSE THIS REMAINS A SENSITIVE POLITICAL ISSUE IN WHICH THE GOJ WISHES TO MAINTAIN A LOW PROFILE. IN THE MEANTIME, WE INTEND TO ENCOURAGE THE CROWN PRINCE IN HIS EFFORTS AND TO BE ALERT TO FAVORABLE CHANGES IN THE AMOUNT OF ACCEPTABLE PUBLIC EXPOSURE IN THIS ISSUE WHICH MIGHT PERMIT A MORE ACTIVE USG ROLE.

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